BY HORSE CAR TO CITY ISLAND

P. S. COMMISSION DIGS UP A REAL ANTIQUE.

Has Anybody Got a Few Narrow Gauge Cars to Lend?—Fears That the Seven Now in Commission Will Fall to Pieces, and Narrow Gaugers Are Scarce.

They have been thinking for ten or twelve years of repairing the seven horse cars that richochet every now and then over the twin streaks of rust maintained by the Pelham Park Railroad Company and the City Island Railroad Company between Bartow, a station on the Harlem branch of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, and the yacht haven known as City Island. They have thus far taken it out in thinking, but some explorer told the Public Service Commission that there was such a street railway and the commission sent some of its inspectors to see if it really was so. The inspector reported that it really was so and that it was *such* a railway!

After that—hearings. There have been three so far—May 7, May 14 and yesterday, with a fourth now looming up for June 8. At first the commission hoped that a little paint would hold the cars together for another summer, but it now seems to be of the opinion that all that is needed to give perfect satisfaction to the patrons is new floors, new roofs, new platforms, new seats, new windows, new trucks, new wheels, new rails and a new roadbed. Aside from these defects the commission believes that the road is perfectly well equipped for the duties that devolve upon it.

They call it two [and a half miles from Bartow to City Island in fair weather. When it rains they call it several other things. You get off the train at Bartow and look for a trolley car. You see a Noah's ark sort of contrivance that will seat fourteen passengers if they're not fat and don't mind sitting close, which they usually do—especially in summer, when the travel is heaviest. You look around for a step-ladder to get in with, because you don't like the looks of the step, but when you are assured by Boatman Jim Knoblauch, now serving as conductor, that the step is perfectly safe—he knows it is because it's been doing service for thirty-four years and never broke down yet—why, then you take a chance and skip lightly in. Avoiding three or four obviously soft spots in the floor, you pick your way to your seat. As soon as the driver gets through watching a spirited game of craps that is at that moment in progress on the station platform, another boatman, temporarily serving as driver says he guesses he'll cast off, does so, and in about the same time it would take to walk it you arrive at City Island. It's a pretty rough voyage; the old ship does more or less tossing and a bit of pitching and all but dips her nose under, and if you're not a trifle seasick before you've made port it's because you're a pretty good sailor.

Going over to City Island is a comparatively simple matter, because as a rule the Noah's ark arrangement meets the trains from New York. Coming back is different. Most people prefer to walk, but if you insist on sailing you sit on the porch of Thwaite's Hotel until your craft heaves in sight. Then you board her and, if you are wise, fall asleep in some sheltered nook of the deck. Ultimately, when it happens to occur to him, the starter will rise from his time honored seat on the hotel porch, yawn ostentatiously and presently you are awakened by that old seasick feeling and you find that sure enough you are headed back for Bartow.

Commissioner Eustis, who has been presiding at the various hearings about painting those cars, says that he's been told the roofs of the cars need calking and everybody knows you can't go comfortably sailing in an uncalked horse car. In fact George W. Robinson, a sailmaker who lives at City Island, testified regarding one stormy voyage, saying that there wasn't anybody in the car that didn't get splashed and that several folks had to change their cabins. He was asked how long that particular craft had been in service and he replied that he didn't know, adding that he was only a young man. He thought his grandfather might perhaps be able to state, if he were alive, but unfortunately the old man had passed away several years ago as a result of being old. Lawyer Gardner, who appeared for the railway company, tried to shake Mr. Robinson's testimony, but the sailmaker insisted that he knew water when he was soaked in it and that it was water he was soaked in on the occasion of the voyage in question.

Then there was Engineer Arthur Clark, who made a round trip from Bartow to City Island last April and hasn't been feeling well since. He said that the car roofs were patched, that the floors were rotten and the seats of wood.

That brings it down to yesterday's hearing. A. J. Kenyon, obviously nervous, appeared for Lawyer Gardner and when questioned by Commissioner Eustis admitted that after examination it had been determined that the cars were not susceptible of repairs. He didn't think that even new coats of paint would hold 'em together much longer—not even waterproof paint. The only thing that Mr. Kenyon could think of that would be of any help was an adjournment of the hearing. Commissioner Eustis didn't seem to think that this would do the cars much good. He said that the summer travel would be in full swing pretty soon and that the patrons of the road were entitled to relief. Mr. Kenyon said what was the use of doing anything with the cars when pretty soon a monorail might be installed. The company was thinking strongly of it, he said. Commissioner Eustis thought that while the monorail idea might be all right, it would come too late for this summer's travel. He told Mr. Kenyon that he knew of two cars that the Interborough road was using for waiting rooms that would be a blamed sight—that is to say, would be far better than those the road had now in use, but Mr. Kenyon dashed this hope by replying that the City Island road was narrow gauge, while the cars referred to were of standard gauge.

Mr. Kenyon declared that as soon as Mr. Shonts got back from Europe the matter of the monorail system would be decided. Commissioner Eustis asked if Mr. Shonts were on the way back at present. Mr. Kenyon wouldn't go as far as to say that, but he did reply:

"Yes, sir: he is now on the high seas."

A gentleman who announced that he was a delegate from the Board of Trade of City Island arose and announced that he was ready to give testimony regarding the conditions of the roofs of the cars.

"Do you want to testify that the car roofs are all right?" demanded Commissioner Eustis.

The Board of Trade delegate put his hand to his heart, sank into his chair and called feebly for water.

"All right, then," said the Commissioner, "we don't need your testimony then. We've had plenty of testimony to the effect that the roofs are sieves."

Another delegate from the Board of Trade wanted to know if the City Island road intended to give such service that the new service of the New Haven road would be met.

"People walk now," he said plaintively, "and promise never to come back and we don't think that's very good for City Island."

The hearing was adjourned to June 8, and meantime City Island folks will have to do the best they can. They have to take chances, those City Island folks, for if the bottom of a car happens to drop out they'll have to run all the way to the end of the route, in case the conductor is taking a nap on the rear platform. The history of the road has been on the whole a peaceful one, broken only by the trouble that arose after one of the cars ran into a paralyzed fox terrier. The owner of the dog was sued for the damage done to the car, but the case has not yet been decided.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

"The Romance of the Reaper," which was issued serially in *Everybody's Magazine*, now appears in book form. It is really a history of the development of agriculture during the last eighty years and it shows the results which have been accomplished by labor saving agricultural machinery. It also attests how a great industry has grown up in the United States and how by manufacturing on a large scale and at low cost Americans are able to make the best machines and to sell them in every country of the globe. It thus is a direct reply to Bismarck's question: "Why don't we make these machines in Germany?"

Marion Crawford's new book, the "Prima Donna," has sent people back to "Fair Margaret" and compelled the printing of a new edition of the earlier book. The third novel of the "Margaret Dunne" trilogy is written and it will be published under the title of "The Diva's Ruby." One of Mr. Crawford's admirers has been complaining at the length of time which the author compels the readers of the story to wait between the different parts of it. "Sir," he writes, "if you were writing for posterity it were a different matter. A representative in Congress was caught trying to make a speech upon another Representative's time. When taken to task by the other he said: 'You promised to divide your time with me.' 'Yes,' was the reply, but I didn't offer to divide eternity with you.' We are not dividing eternity with you, Mr. Crawford. Your writings are temporal, not to say temporary, and you try the patience of the most good natured."

Marion Crawford describes the three ages of woman with much gallantry in the trilogy he is writing of Margaret Dunne: "Youth, between 16 and 20; perfection, which begins at 20 and lasts until further notice; and old age, which women generally place beyond 70."

Julia Cartwright (Mrs. Ady), who has given us the delightful studies of the Renaissance in her lives of "Beatrice" and "Isabella d'Este," will publish a new book next month entitled "Baldissarre Castiglione, the Perfect Courtier; His Life and Letters." Castiglione is best known as the author of "Il Cortegiano" and was himself regarded as an excellent type of the "perfect courtier." He served as Italian Ambassador to England and Spain early in the sixteenth century and his life naturally embodies much of the contemporary history of the Europe of his day. Mrs. Cartwright obtains the material largely from the archives of Italy.

"The Power Supreme" is a novel of Church and State in South America to be published next month. The author, Francis C. Nicholas, has spent many years in Central and South America among the Indians and he will give accurate descriptions of their life and customs. Part of the story is laid in the rubber country and it shows in a new light the peonage among the Indians.

Mr. Havelock Ellis, who wrote "The Soul of Spain," has been a serious student and investigator of the appearances, the tendencies and developments of modern Spain for twenty years. Spain's political, industrial and commercial aspects are rapidly gaining in importance, Mr. Ellis believes from his study and interpretation of the country.

Mrs. Carroll Watson Rankin has written a sequel to "Dandelion Cottage," which is in the hands of the publishers. "There really is a dandelion cottage," Mrs. Rankin says. "It belonged to the church, simply because it happened to stand on land that the church acquired. Some children, now grown up, really played in it one summer. Some years ago the house, then called 'The Annex,' was put in repair, and it goes now, solely because of the book, by the name 'Dandelion Cottage.' The people living in it tell me that every now and then children come to the door to ask to be permitted to look inside to see if there really are dandelions on the dining room wall. One infant actually upbraided the tenant for having the dandelions covered by new paper!"

The passage in Charles Rann Kennedy's book "The Servant in the House" which has most impressed its literary quality upon those who see the play or read the book is the description of the ideal church. "The pillars of it go up like the brawny trunks of heroes; the sweet human flesh of men and women is moulded about its bulwarks, strong, impregnable; the faces of little children laugh out from every cornerstone; the terrible spans and arches of it are the joined hands of comrades, and up in the heights and spaces there are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreamers of the world. It is yet building—building and built upon. * * * Sometimes the work goes forward in deep darkness; sometimes in blinding light; now beneath the burden of unutterable anguish; now to the tune of a great laughter and heroic shoutings like the cry of thunder. Sometimes in the silence of the nighttime one may hear the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the dome—the comrades that have climbed ahead." The book, like the play, is being much discussed at present.

Mr. Giovanni Cena's novel, "Gli Ammonitori," has been translated by Mme. Olivia Rosetti Agresti and is to be published under the title of "The Forewarners." Mrs. Humphry Ward contributes a preface to the translation.

The second number of the new theatrical and journalistic venture, *The Mask*, contains a long essay by Mr. Edward Gordon Craig on "The Actor and the Uber-Marionette," in which the writer urges that since the perfect artist is he who has perfect control over the material he works in and as the actor has to deal with that most intractible material, flesh and blood, over which he never can assume ideally complete control, the actor can never be a master artist, and so had better be swept off the stage and make room for the marionette. The article is written with many quaint touches of irony.

"Humanity exists in longing for what it can never attain," Mr. F. C. Constable says in his article on "Dukes and Tramps" published in the current *Saturday Review*. "Let socialists remember that we do not live on bread alone; even the poorest and meanest in birth must, for life, have his dreams. And so long as we have dukes and tramps with us, though but few can rise to their enviable position, every one of us can live, dreaming in hope. Even the noblest of us—those political allies, dukes and tramps—may not be fully satisfied. For at times the duke yearns to be a tramp and the tramp a duke."

"Never say Die" seems a curious title for a book written in praise of married life when the wife is the wife of one's choice. The book, written by the Grand Duke Michael under this title, is said to be in part autobiographical. It is frank and ingenuous and throws interesting sidelights upon imperial home life which, as the Grand Duke tells us in his preface, show that people of high station are not "the happiest beings on this earth."

A letter written by Browning and said never before to have been published concerns "How We Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix." The letter says: "The 'Ride to Ghent' is altogether an imaginary incident. I remember writing it at sea off the coast of Africa, sitting under the bulwark of the ship for the shade's sake, with a strong wish to be once more on the back of a certain good horse York, at home. I wrote the poem in pencil on the inside of the cover of Bartoli's 'Simboli Trasportati al Morale'—nearly the only book I had with me. This must account for and excuse the impossible distance (even for York) between place and place. I fancied that Ghent was invested in extremity and able at last to receive news of succor by some unsuspected line of road—but the quantity of galloping was the main thing in my head."